681

E

PALESTINE

E 6038

11 MAY 1948

53

Registry Number: E6038/4/31

TELEGRAM FROM

Sir, Alec Kirkbride

No. AMMAN 311

Dated

Received in Registry: 10th May 11th "

Palestine Truce.

Refers Foreign Office telegram No ,308 to Jedda. (E6014/4/31) As neither Azzam or Transjordan authorities were in possesion of latest draft truce terms Sir, A. Kirkbride gave them text in English. Gives report on their reactions.

Last Paper.

6037

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8. Palestine Nlet

May 12.

Tel. Amman 370

Rptd. New York 2004
Cairo 688
Baghdad 480
Beirut 375
Damascus 301
Jedda 333
B.M.E.O. 412

May. 11.

8. Ch Abroad. May. 15.

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

(Minutes.)

D. Balfour 11/V

Mr Belfrage May 12

Tel. thanks in reply to Jara. 4

BABB 12.5

Next Paper.

6039

E 6038

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on]

MAY 1948

Cypher/OTP DIPLOMATIC SECRET DISTRIBUTION

FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir A. Kirkbride D.2. 0 p.m. 10th May, 1948.
No.311 R.5.20 p.m. 10th May, 1948.

10th May, 1948.

Repeated to United Kingdom Delegation New York
Bagdad
Beirut
Cairo
Damascus
Jedda
B.M.E.O.
Jerusalem

MOST IMMEDIATE

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No.311 of May 10th repeated for information to United Kingdom Delegation New York, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Jedda, B.M.E.O. and Jerusalem.

Palestine truce.

Your telegram No.308 to Jedda.

As neither Azzam or Transjordan authorities were in possession of latest draft truce terms I gave them text in English which I had received from you.

2. After he had studied text, Azzam came to see me and in our discussion seemed inclined in favour of acceptance. He had two doubts. First was about immigration to which he thought reference dangerously vague. Second was about practical difficulty of giving effect to some of the provisions in the absence of a neutral executive force at the disposal of the Truce Commission. He fully appreciated the advantage to the Arabs of accepting when the Jews refused but he feared that if the Jews accepted too the physical difficulties on the Arab side of carrying out some of the provisions might enable the Jews to accuse the Arabs of being truce-breakers. He has now, proceeded to Damascus where a meeting of the Political Committee of the Arab League will be convened to discuss the proposals.

3. This morning King Abdullah and the Prime Minister of Trans-Jordan asked me to discuss draft which they had considered overnight. They asked me to thank you for your advice and to tell you that it was received in the spirit which might be expected from the most moderate of the Arab States. To me they said they were impressed by practical difficulties of giving effect to some of the obligations which the agreement would impose on the Arabs.

4. Both the King and the Prime Minister are anxious for a peaceful solution in Palestine specially in view of pressure which is being brought to bear on them

/by other Arab States

by other Arab States on the subject of the Arab Legion. There is, I feel sure, no grounds for fear expressed by the Lebanese Prime Minister that the King would do anything to prevent acceptance of truce by the Arab Legion.

5. It was clear, however, that both were anxious to try and retain freedom of action vis á vis the other Arab States by exploiting the fact that Trans-Jordan is not a member of United Nations. The Prime Minister speaking on this subject after we had left the King said that if the Arab League refused the truce he did not want to be implicated inevitably in a war with the Jews and that if the Arab League accepted the truce he did not wish the Arab Legion to be automatically debarred from being used for security purposes in Arab areas of Palestine. (He had thought of the second point independently and I had not mentioned to him the possibility of the eventuality in paragraph 4 of your telegram No.333). Trans-Jordan delegate to the meeting in Damascus may therefore take up the attitude that formal decision of the League on this subject whatever it may be must be taken only by members who are also members of United Nations. In the event Trans-Jordan will no doubt continue to act in accordance with our wishes.

Foreign Office please pass to United Kingdom Delegation and Jedda as my telegrams Nos.38 and 36 respectively.

[Repeated to United Kingdom Delegation New York and Jedda].

[Copies sent to Secretary of State for the Colonies].

[Copy sent to Middle East Secretariat].

B B B

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Registry No. E 6038/4/31

~~Top Secret.~~
Secret.
~~Confidential.~~
~~Restricted.~~
~~Open.~~

BABB

OUT FILE

CYPHER

F.O. 104

Immediate
Secret

Despatched M.

Draft.

ALMAN

Telegram.

No. 370

(Date) May 11

Repeat to :—

U.K.Del.New York 2004
Cairo 688
Bagdad 480
Beirut ~~340~~ 375
Damascus 301
Jedda 333
B.M.E.C. 452

Addressed to Amman telno. 370 of May 11th repeated for information to U.K.Del.New York. Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, B.M.E.C.

Your telegram No.311 [of May 10 : Palestine truce].

I appreciate King Abdullah's desire not to be involved in war with the Jews as a result of Arab League decision to this effect. I also ~~fully~~ understand his wish that the Arab Legion should be able to take part in police action in Palestine even in the event of a truce, but I cannot believe that it is desirable for him to stand out against a truce for this reason or to use the pretext of non-membership of the United Nations (much as I sympathise with his natural inclination to turn to his own advantage repeated U.N. refusals to admit him). I would hope that if a truce were concluded, means might nevertheless be found to invite him to provide part of his forces for the maintenance of security in Arab areas or to legalise such action if it had taken place prior to the conclusion of a truce. Article 1 ~~of the truce terms~~ seems to provide opportunity for the Truce Commission to authorise the performance of police functions, and Article 7 also seems to allow the Commission to sanction any ~~attempt~~ agreement which might have been made between Jewish and Arab authorities for the maintenance of public order. There would seem to be nothing necessarily to prevent the inclusion

in/

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

En Clair.
~~*Code.*~~
Cypher.

RECEIVED IN C.E.
12 MAY 1948

Distribution :—

~~Dip. Secret~~

It would not fall to us to interpret truce terms but

Copies to :—

(89654) Wt.14696/147 100,000 6/47 A.& E.W.Ltd. Gp.685

in some such arrangement or an agreement between the Arabs and Jews for functioning of the Arab Legion on police duties inside Palestine. Article 2 would presumably not be taken to stand in the way of such action if this was agreed by both Arabs and Jews and by the Truce Commission.

2. You should, if you think it would serve a useful purpose, put these points (some or all of them) to King Abdullah and tell him that while I fully appreciate his position and the constructive and peaceable nature of his intentions, I still feel that there would be great political and tactical advantage for the Arabs in expressing their acceptance of the truce terms.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

CUT FILE

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F6038/4/31

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on]

Cypher/OTP.

DIPLOMATIC SECRET DISTRIBUTION.

Secret.

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO AMMAN.

No.370.

D. 12.45 a.m. 12th May, 1948.

11th May, 1948.

Repeated to New York (U.K.Delegation) No.2004
Cairo No.688
Bagdad No.480
Beirut No.375
Damascus No.301.
Jedda No.555.
B.M.E.O. Cairo No.452.

IMMEDIATE.

SECRET.

Addressed to Amman telegram No.370 of 11th May,

repeated for information to United Kingdom Delegation New York, Cairo, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, B.M.E.O.

Your telegram No.311 [of May 10th: Palestine truce].

I appreciate King Abdullah's desire not to be involved in war with the Jews as a result of Arab League decision to this effect. I also understand his wish that the Arab Legion should be able to take part in police action in Palestine even in the event of a truce, but I cannot believe that it is desirable for him to stand out against a truce for this reason or to use the pretext of non-membership of the United Nations (much as I sympathise with his natural inclination to turn to his own advantage repeated United Nations refusals to admit him). I would hope that if a truce were concluded, means might nevertheless be found to invite him to provide part of his forces for the maintenance of security in Arab areas or to legalise such action if it had taken place prior to the conclusion of a truce. It would not fall to us to interpret truce terms but Article 1 seems to provide opportunity for the Truce Commission to authorise the performance of police functions, and Article 7 also seems to allow the Commission to sanction any agreement which might have been made between Jewish and Arab authorities for the maintenance of public order. There would seem to be nothing necessarily to prevent the inclusion in some such arrangement of an agreement between the Arabs and Jews for functioning of the Arab Legion on police duties inside Palestine. Article 2 would presumably not be taken to stand in the way of such action if this was agreed by both Arabs and Jews and by the Truce Commission.

2. You should if you think it would serve a useful purpose put some or all of these points to King Abdullah and tell him that while I fully appreciate his position and the constructive and peaceable nature of his intentions, I still feel that there would be great political and tactical advantage for the Arabs in expressing their acceptance of the truce terms.

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